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MEMORANDA

ON THE

Short Line Railway Question.

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ON THE

SHORT LINE RAILWAY QUESTION.

The undersigned deem it to be their duty to call special attention once more to the Short Line Railway question, with the object not only of placing on record the views held by a large majority of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, the City Council and the citizens of Halifax generally, but in the hope that some means may be devised whereby steps may be taken without further loss of time, to have the surveys completed on the "shortest and best practicable route" for the proposed line of railway, connecting the principal ports of the Maritime Provinces with the Canadian Pacific Railway, at or near Montreal, having in view the ultimate adoption of this route by the government, as none other will prove satisfactory to this section of the Dominion.

Our contention is—

1. That the project of constructing a short line railway to the West, originated with the people of Halifax,—better means of communication with the interior having been felt to be an urgent necessity in the interests of trade and commerce.

2. That the surveys were undertaken professedly in the interests of Halifax, as the nearest continental port to Europe, St. John, and in the general interests of the Maritime Provinces.

3. That we were promised by the Dominion Government the "shortest and best" practicable line that could be obtained after careful, thorough and complete surveys had been made to establish where this line could be found.

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4. That the surveys so far undertaken have in some instances been barometrical explorations only, that others were hurried through and that none of them were either thorough or complete.

5. That the line which has been classed as "taking the first place" and known as No. 6 or "the International route," running from Montreal to Halifax via Lachine, Sherbrook, Megantic and Mattawamkeag is most objectionable from almost every point of view and that it is unfit to be used as a main trunk short line from the seaboard to the interior.

6. That the "International route" will be of little practical service to the port of Halifax, the Province of Nova, or the Maritime Provinces, as it is not likely to afford any better accommodation than the existing Intercolonial Railway, and that it is not the "shortest" nor the "best," nor is it even a good line.

7. That the official reports of the Government Engineers engaged in surveying the "International route" (which reports were submitted to Parliament) show clearly and conclusively that it is an unfavorable line, involving many long and excessively heavy gradients and sharp curves, passing over high summits and for long distances through barren country, besides being in close proximity to existing American lines of railway terminating at rival American ports.

8. That the official reports, laid before Parliament, of other Government Engineers engaged in surveying other routes for the Short Line Railway, indicate that a vastly superior line, much shorter in distance, easier to construct, with low summits, easy gradients and curves and passing through superior lands, can be obtained via the North Shore Railway, Quebec, Lake Chesuncook and Canterbury.

9. That this line known as "The Combination Line" has been surveyed by order of the Government, with the exception of a short gap of about 35 or 40 miles from Lake Chesuncook, westwardly, which gap has been stated by Mr. A. L. Light, C. E., and Mr. Vernon Smith, C. E., (Government Engineers), to be "a low lying valley" presenting no engineering difficulties of any kind.

10. That in the interests of the Maritime Provinces, but particularly of the port of Halifax, the merits of "The Combination Line" should be investigated before any contract is entered into with any company for the construction of the contemplated line of railway.

COMPARISON BETWEEN "THE INTERNATIONAL ROUTE" AND "THE COMBINATION LINE,"

from the latest and most reliable data that can be obtained.

	INTERNAT'N'L ROUTE.	COMBINAT'N LINE.
Built and owned by the C. P. R. Co.....	11 miles.	172 miles.
Built and owned by the Dominion Government.	201 "	201 "
Existing Railways to be acquired.....	170 "	None.
To be built.....	358 "	351 "
Total distance Montreal to Halifax.....	740 "	724* "
Maximum gradients—feet per mile.....	74	35 to 40
Minimum curves—degree radius.....	10°	4°

*By Mr. Light's computation, the total length of the "Combination Line," from Montreal to Halifax, is 710 miles,—showing a saving of 30 miles.

The undersigned are of opinion that it is still open to the Government to recind the Railway Resolutions passed at the last session of Parliament in favor of the International route, upon its being shown to them that a superior, shorter and more favorable line exists in another direction, and the adoption of which will not prejudice or sacrifice a single Canadian interest.

We assert that no contract has yet been entered into between the Government and the International Railway Company or any other company for the construction of the proposed Short Line Railway, and we have it on high authority that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company as a corporation have not yet come to any determination as to which route they would feel disposed to adopt in the event of their entering upon the undertaking.

It is true that it has been stated through the press that several prominent directors of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company have recently been nominated as directors of the so-

called International Railway Company, but there is good reason to believe that the nominations, in some instances at least, were made without the knowledge or consent of the gentlemen whose names were used.

The whole question is therefore still in the same position as it was on the adjournment of Parliament at its last session, and so far from being settled, it is belivered that the whole subject will be again opened up at the forth-coming session.

J. C. MACKINTOSH,
Mayor.

W. C. SILVER,
Ch'man Chamber of Commerce.

E. H. KEATING,
City Engineer.

HALIFAX, 7th December, 1885.